

Ed Humpherson
Director General
Office for Statistics Regulation

10th July 2020

Dear Ed,

The use of unpublished statistics in Scottish Government press release

Thank you for your letter of 8 July relating to the use of an unpublished statistics on routine serology (antibody) testing in a Scottish Government news release on 23rd June. This was an oversight, for which we apologise. As you are aware, there is very high demand for statistics relating to COVID-19 and the statistical teams in Public Health Scotland and Scottish Government are producing a large volume of statistics every day. On this occasion, the fact this statistic had not been published was missed by the teams in both organisations.

Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland have been working closely during the COVID-19 period to ensure we are presenting as complete and coherent a picture on COVID-19 in Scotland as early as possible. We do recognise the importance of the statistics on antibody testing and the need to get these into the public domain. These data are currently still in development but, given the public focus on these statistics, Public Health Scotland will release an initial adhoc report on antibody testing on Wednesday 15th July. This will be published alongside the Public Health Scotland weekly COVID-19 report.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Scott Heald & Roger Halliday

Scott Heald, Head of Profession for Statistics, Public Health Scotland
Roger Halliday, Chief Statistician, Scottish Government